

## House File 441 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 441

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### A BILL FOR

- 1 An Act creating a licensed social worker loan repayment program
- 2 and revolving fund.
- 3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1     Section 1. NEW SECTION.   261.115   Licensed social worker loan  
2   repayment program — definitions.

3     1. A licensed social worker loan repayment program is  
4   established, to be administered by the college student aid  
5   commission for the purpose of increasing the number of social  
6   workers serving in critical human service areas.

7     2. For purposes of this division:

8     *a. "Critical human service area"* includes but is not limited  
9   to an area of the state with a shortage of social workers  
10  providing health, mental health, substance abuse, aging,  
11  HIV/AIDS, victim, or child welfare services, or communities  
12  with multilingual needs. A critical human service area shall  
13  be an area designated as a mental health professional shortage  
14  area by the United States department of health and human  
15  services health resources and services administration.

16    *b. "Licensed social worker"* means an individual holding a  
17  license issued under chapter 154C who is employed in a critical  
18  human service area.

19    Sec. 2. NEW SECTION.   261.116   Licensed social worker loan  
20  repayment revolving fund.

21    1. *a.* A licensed social worker loan repayment revolving  
22  fund is created in the state treasury as a separate fund under  
23  the control of the commission. The commission shall deposit  
24  moneys appropriated for purposes of the licensed social worker  
25  loan repayment program, moneys repaid by loan repayment award  
26  recipients who fail to meet the service area requirements, and  
27  any other moneys obtained or accepted by the commission for  
28  deposit into the fund.

29    *b.* Moneys in the fund shall be used for purposes of the  
30  licensed social worker loan repayment program. Notwithstanding  
31  section 8.33, moneys deposited in the fund shall not revert  
32  to any fund of the state at the end of any fiscal year but  
33  shall remain in the fund and be continuously available for the  
34  program.

35    2. Notwithstanding section 12C.7, subsection 2, interest

1 or earnings on moneys deposited in the fund shall be credited  
2 to the fund.

3     Sec. 3. NEW SECTION.   261.117   **Loan payment awards.**

4     1. Each applicant for loan repayment shall, in accordance  
5 with the rules of the commission, do the following:

6       a. Complete and file an application for licensed social  
7 worker loan repayment. The individual shall be responsible  
8 for the prompt submission of any information required by the  
9 commission.

10      b. File a new application and submit information as  
11 required by the commission annually on the basis of which the  
12 applicant's eligibility for the renewed loan repayment will be  
13 evaluated and determined.

14      c. Complete and return on a form approved by the commission  
15 an affidavit of practice verifying that the applicant is a  
16 licensed social worker in a critical human service area.

17     2. Loan repayment awards shall be made annually to  
18 applicants in the following order of priority:

19       a. Applicants who have received payment of an award pursuant  
20 to this section in a prior year and who have provided social  
21 work services in a critical human service area in the year  
22 prior to such application.

23       b. Applicants who have not received payment of an award  
24 pursuant to this section in a prior year and who have provided  
25 social work services in a critical human service area in the  
26 year prior to such application.

27       c. Applicants from underrepresented racial, cultural, and  
28 ethnic groups and individuals with disabilities.

29     3. The contract for the loan repayment shall stipulate the  
30 time period the licensed social worker shall practice in a  
31 critical human service area. In addition, the contract shall  
32 stipulate that the licensed social worker shall repay any funds  
33 paid on the person's loan by the commission if the person fails  
34 to practice in a critical human service area for the required  
35 period of time.

1     4. *a.* The annual amount of a licensed social worker loan  
2 repayment award shall be six thousand five hundred dollars or  
3 twenty percent of the licensed social worker's total federally  
4 guaranteed Stafford loan amount under the federal family  
5 education loan program or the federal direct loan program,  
6 including principal and interest, whichever amount is less. A  
7 recipient shall not receive loan repayment that exceeds the  
8 total remaining balance of the recipient's student loan debt or  
9 twenty-five thousand dollars, whichever is less.

10    *b.* Awards shall be within the amounts appropriated for such  
11 purpose and shall be based on the availability of funds.

12     5. The commission shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A  
13 to administer this division.

14                                   EXPLANATION

15     This bill creates a licensed social worker loan repayment  
16 program administered by the college student aid commission.  
17 Applicants for the program must enter into an agreement with  
18 the commission, agreeing to work for a specific period of time  
19 in a "critical human service area", defined as a geographic  
20 area in Iowa with a shortage of social workers in health,  
21 mental health, substance abuse, aging, HIV/AIDS, victim, or  
22 child welfare concerns, or communities with multilingual needs.

23     The program provides a specific annual benefit, up to  
24 \$6,500, for licensed social workers who have worked in a  
25 critical human service area in the previous year. No recipient  
26 shall receive loan repayment that exceeds the total remaining  
27 balance of the student loan debt and no recipient shall receive  
28 cumulative awards in excess of \$25,000.

29     The program is funded by a special revolving fund in  
30 the state treasury, controlled by the college student aid  
31 commission. The fund consists of moneys appropriated for  
32 purposes of the program, repayments by participants who fail  
33 to meet the service area requirements, and any other available  
34 moneys. Moneys deposited in the fund do not revert to any  
35 other fund at the end of any fiscal year but shall remain in the

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1 fund and be continuously available for the program. Interest  
2 or earnings on moneys deposited in the fund shall also be  
3 credited to the fund.